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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 005159

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/SE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV PHUM PREL TU TIP IN TURKEY](#)

SUBJECT: GOT ACTIONS SINCE MARCH TO COMBAT TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

REF: SECSTATE 171293

1. Summary: Emboffs met August 12-13 with MFA officials and contacted the director of the Ankara office of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to discuss actions taken by the GOT to combat trafficking in persons (TIP) subsequent to March 30, the end of the period covered in the 2003 TIP Report. The following report is a compilation of those actions. End Summary.

Prevention

2. The GOT July 8 sent a diplomatic note to the embassies of eight countries that constitute the primary source countries for TIP in Turkey -- Ukraine, Georgia, Bulgaria, Romania, Moldova, Russia, Azerbaijan, and Belarus. In the note, the GOT seeks bilateral cooperation on combating TIP (Note: dipnote faxed to EUR/SE. End Note). As of August 12, none of the countries had responded.

3. The GOT has developed a new questionnaire for visa applicants to better screen for potential TIP victims. The questionnaire is designed to determine whether applicants are submitting false documents relating to their employment status in their home country. The GOT will also require that the MFA of the applicant's country verify the validity of employment documents. The GOT has coordinated with the IOM office in Kiev on screening procedures for visa applicants. Turkish consular officers in Moldova helped break up a trafficking operation when they notified local authorities of falsified documents for "dancers."

4. The Interior Ministry has developed a new set of guidelines for the issuance of work permits to foreigners in the entertainment sector. Under the guidelines: work contracts must be prepared in Turkish and Russian (contracts in Turkish and French will no longer be accepted); contracts must specify that the employer will pay for the return ticket of the foreign worker; contracts must meet the minimum wage; and contracts must specify that the worker has the right to contact the police or Labor Ministry.

5. GOT officials continue to participate in TIP-related Stability Pact meetings -- MFA DG for Consular Affairs Apaydin attended a June 24 Stability Pact meeting in Bucharest as the GOT national coordinator for TIP. Turkish judges participated in the Program for the Development of an Anti-Trafficking Module for Judges and Prosecutors, held April 10-13 in Sofia and organized by the Stability Pact and the International Center for Migration Policy Development. Turkish representatives also participated in the April 30 Council of Europe meeting in Strasbourg aimed at preparing a TIP convention and the May 16 EU Experts Group meeting on TIP in Brussels.

6. According to Greek and Turkish officials, the two governments have agreed to exchange anti-TIP liaison officers to coordinate efforts.

7. FM and Deputy PM Gul August 12 issued a press statement on TIP, which was widely distributed to media outlets (Note: Text faxed to EUR/SE. End Note). The statement was covered by the Anatolia News Agency as well as a number of dailies, including the Turkish Daily News and mass circulation Hurriyet and Milliyet.

18. Parliament in June approved amendments to the Citizenship Law establishing a three-year probationary period before foreigners marrying Turkish citizens can attain citizenship. The purpose of the amendments is to prevent bogus marriages that can lead to human trafficking. In an example of such a case, Russian citizen Elvira Salmanova filed a complaint June 30 accusing her Turkish citizen husband of forcing her into prostitution. Working with IOM, the GOT returned Salmanova to Russia at her request and opened a trafficking case against her husband.

19. The Ministry of Tourism in July distributed nationwide a guide for use by all elements of the tourism sector. The guide, based on language developed by the World Tourism Organization and approved by UNGA, requires countries to cooperate to prevent all forms of exploitation (Note: Text faxed to EUR/SE. End Note).

Protection

10. Two GOT offices -- the General Directorate on the Status and Problems of Women, and the Social Services and Child Protection Unit -- met with IOM officials July 30 to discuss the establishment of a project that would include: TIP shelters, a voluntary return program, awareness raising workshops, referral services, and reintegration assistance.

11. The Ministry of Interior distributed a TIP guide for law enforcement officials. The guide establishes proper procedures for investigating TIP as well as identifying and assisting potential TIP victims (Note: Text faxed to EUR/SE. End Note).

12. The GOT has submitted to the Cabinet a decree to provide free medical care to TIP victims. According to MFA, most Cabinet members have signed the decree, which could be ready for the President's signature by the end of August.

13. The GOT plans to dispatch 20 "expert" police units to cities where TIP is most common. Plans call for a database linking 80 cities to monitor and combat TIP.

14. The Interior Ministry has included a TIP lesson in the Police Academy curriculum in the human rights program.

Prosecution

15. Police in Erzurum arrested 11 people July 10 on TIP charges. Nine of these have been taken to court, three of whom are police officers. In addition, a related case has been opened against 13 police officers for alleged involvement in the crime.

16. A Turkish woman and an Azerbaijani woman filed a complaint July 27 accusing three Turkish men of forcing them into prostitution. The accused have been arrested and are being investigated under the anti-trafficking law.

17. Trabzon police August 10 conducted a sweep of hotels, cafeterias and tea houses and detained 310 foreign women, including women from Russia, Ukraine and Georgia. Police also detained 190 men, including hotel and cafeteria managers. All of the detained women have been screened to determine whether they are potential TIP victims. Authorities deported 69 of the women who said they were voluntarily working as prostitutes. Some of the others claimed they were trafficked; their cases are under investigation. Authorities are also investigating 17 alleged traffickers in the case, including Turkish, Russian, and Azerbaijani citizens. Eleven of the detained women are ill and receiving medical treatment. All of the women remaining in Turkey have been released from detention, but are not yet free to leave the country.